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*Arkady Nikolayevich Shevchenko is the highest-ranking Soviet official ever to have defected to the United States. Born in the Ukraine in 1930, Shevchenko holds a doctorate from the Moscow Institute of International Relations. He was a protege of Andrei A. Gromyko and from 1970 to 1973, as a member of Gromyko's staff, came to know the workings of the Soviet system from the inside and from the top. In 1973, Shevchenko was named undersecretary of the United Nations, a major position in the U.N. civil service, reporting to then Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. Shevchenko's decision to defect came just two years later, in 1975; but rather than accept him immediately as a defector, the United States asked him to remain in his U.N. position and gather information for the United States. When the Soviet Union became aware of this deception in 1978, Shevchenko completed his defection.*

*This tale has been told by now on CBS' "60 Minutes"; in articles and reviews in the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, Newsweek and the Los Angeles Times; and in Time magazine's lengthy excerpts from Shevchenko's newly published book. Reviewers and commentators have been consis-*

*tently impressed by Shevchenko's detailed knowledge of the Soviet bureaucracy and fascinated by his portraits of Soviet officials, most notably of Gromyko. Several, however, have objected that Shevchenko's account of his defection itself leaves a strange echo of words left unsaid. On the face of it, one should expect that a recent agent of the CIA, who is even now not a United States citizen, might pass over certain matters in discreet silence. But those who squint at Shevchenko's account also make a tacit assumption that the differences between the Soviet and the American system do not in and of themselves constitute grounds for defection. The Russian defector on this reading is required to lecture the Americans about their own country.*

*The review and interview that follow are the work of a philosopher who has herself left the East for the West and who has written about the differences between them in a book entitled "Notes From the Other Side of Night." Whatever the wisdom of listening for what Arkady Shevchenko has failed to say, there is also, clearly, good reason to listen to what he has said.*

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